

**CITY OF ROCKVILLE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION  
STAFF REPORT  
for  
September 17, 2009  
MEETING NO. 8-09**

**APPLICATION: HDC2010-00478**

**ADDRESS:** 219 Frederick Avenue

**ACCEPTED:** 8/6/09

**OWNER:** Prosper Osei-Wusu

**REQUEST:** Evaluation of  
Significance

**STAFF:** Robin D. Ziek



**PROJECT SUMMARY:**

The applicant requests Evaluation of Significance review by HDC, as part of the Demolition Permit application process. The house has been extensively damaged by fire.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Based on an assessment of the history and architecture of the site, the staff finds that this property fails to meet any of the Criteria for Historic Designation in the City of Rockville.

**[DRAFT MOTION OF EVALUATION OF SIGNIFICANCE WITH FINDINGS:]**

Finding that HDC2010-00478, for Evaluation of Historic Significance of the property at 219 Frederick Avenue does not meet the Criteria for historic designation for the City of Rockville, I move to NOT recommend historic designation of the property.

**BACKGROUND:** A demolition permit was received at the City of Rockville on August 6, 2009. The house was damaged by fire in October 2008. The property is located mid-block on the south side of Frederick Avenue in Lincoln Park. It is a 1-1/2 story Colonial Revival style house, which was constructed in 1949. It is considered a Contributing Resource in the Lincoln Park Conservation District and is considered part of the Third Period of Significance (1949-1970: making the period after the 1949 Mass Annexation into Rockville and lasting until the end of de facto segregation).

**219 Frederick Avenue (HDC2010-00478)**

September 17, 2009  
HDC Evaluation of Significance

The house sits in the middle of two platted lots. It has been used as a rental property for several years, and the owner's intention is to maintain this as a rental property in the future.

**Property Area:** 22,500 sf.

**Structure Area:** 698 sf.

**Zone:** R-60 and Lincoln Park Neighborhood Conservation District (Sec. 25.14.03)

**Development Standards:** The Lincoln Park Conservation District (adopted in 2008) provides specific standards applicable only to Lincoln Park, which restrict the size and height of new construction. Demolition is discouraged but permitted, with additional lot coverage possible if the original structure is retained. Lots may not be resubdivided, and may not be assembled.

**City of Rockville Permits Required:**

Demolition Permit included in Residential Building Permit Application

**Deed Research**

The Property was subdivided as part of the platting of H.L.England's Second Addition to Lincoln Park in 1926, as Block 8 Lots 14 and 15. It was sold by Suburban Properties, Inc. (Mr. England, President) in 1937 and 1941 to Smith and Sarah Jackson. They already owned some property in the Martins Lane area. The house is not shown on the 1949 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, but tax records indicate that the house was built in 1949. The Jacksons owned this property until 1979, after which Mrs. Jackson sold it to Walker and Elizabeth Hill. Mr. Jackson had already passed away. The Hills lived here until recently. Mrs. Hill sold the property in 2006, her husband having already passed away. Mr. Osei-wusu is the current owner, and he has maintained this as rental property.

<b>Liber/Folio</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Grantor</b>	<b>Grantee</b>
31603/559	1/10/2006	Walker I. Hill & EH	Prosper Osei-wusu
5363/874	7/23/1979	Sarah Louise Jackson Ambush	Walker I. Hill & Elizabeth H
812/375 LOT 15, Bl 8	2/24/1941	Suburban Properties, Inc.	Smith and Sarah Jackson
676/11 LOT 14, Bl 8.	8/4/1937	Suburban Properties, Inc	Smith and Sarah Jackson
Suburban properties: H.L. England's Second Addition to Lincoln Park Plat book 4; #342 [also L398/196]			

**Property Description**

The property consists of two platted lots, each one measuring 50 feet by 225 feet (11,250 sf). The land is relatively flat. There are many mature trees on the property, including a few which are dead/dying. The house was built across lot lines, centered in the property with a standard setback from Frederick Avenue.





Front (North) elevation



Rear (South) elevation

The house is a 1-1/2 story Colonial Revival style house, with a side-gable roof with two small dormers on the front elevation, and a large shed dormer on the rear elevation. There is a screened porch on the west elevation, and a small concrete stoop at the front door. The exterior

finish is stucco, and there are applied shutters flanking each window. There is a basement, with exterior access at the back of the house.

In October 2008, there was a basement fire, which destroyed the interior structural system for the first floor including floor joists, beams, and columns. Much of the first floor has collapsed. Smoke damage throughout the house and water damage from fire control also contributed to the interior damage. The applicant has investigated the potential for rehabilitation, but has decided to demolish the structure and build a new house on the property.

### **Historic Significance**

The house was constructed in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, after Lincoln Park was annexed into the City of Rockville. Two families lived here over extended periods of time, and family members continue to reside in Rockville.

The house is considered a Contributing Resource in the Lincoln Park Conservation District, and is included in the Third Period of Significance. This period includes 1949-1970. This reflects the Civil Rights Era with the impetus from returning World War II veterans confronting the effects of segregation in America up to 1970, which marks the effective end of de facto segregation in Rockville.

## **CITY OF ROCKVILLE HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGNATION CRITERIA**

Standing structures and sites, including archeological sites, must be determined to be significant in one or more of the following criteria to be found eligible for designation:

### **I. Historical and cultural significance:**

A. EVENT: Is the site of a significant historic event.

*No, this is not the site of a significant event.*

B. PERSON: Is the site identified with a person or a group of persons who influenced society.

*No, this is not identified with a person or group who influenced society.*

C. PATTERN OF EVENTS: Exemplifies the cultural, economic, social, political or historic heritage of the County and its communities. (See Rockville Context in Management Plan)

*No, the property does not exemplify the cultural heritage of Lincoln Park.*

- D. Has character, interest, or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the City, County, State, or Nation.

*No, the property does not embody the history of Lincoln Park.*

## **II. Architectural and design significance:**

- A. ARCHITECTURE: Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction. *No, the building is not a prototypical example of its type.*
- B. ARCHITECT: Represents the work of a master. *No.*
- C. ARCHITECTURE: Possesses high artistic values. *No.*
- D. Represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction. *No, this criterion applies to multi-site historic districts only.*
- E. Represents an established or familiar visual feature of the neighborhood, community or county due to its singular physical characteristic or landscape.

*No, there is nothing singular about the house or the landscape.*

## **III. Structural Integrity:**

Original site and setting largely preserved. (Lot size, environmental character, trees, setbacks, streetscape)

**"Substantially Altered" - The exterior of the property retains its original form, but the original doors and windows have all been replaced and/or damaged in the fire; and the interior structural system is seriously damaged.**

Minor alterations (porch removal or enclosure, roof material replacement, siding added over old siding, basic mass and fenestration intact.

Original or near original condition (all changes reversible)

Outbuildings present and recognizable

## **IV. Level of site significance: (Check those that apply)**

Local:

State

National:

**ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE**

The property is a good example of a mid-20<sup>th</sup> century Colonial Revival Style house. This is one of many similar examples throughout Lincoln Park and Rockville. This is not the prototype for this architectural style in the city.

**CULTURAL AND SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE**

The property is associated with the African-American community of Lincoln Park, and is considered “Contributing” in the Third Period of Significance for Lincoln Park (1949 – 1970). However, as a single-site historic district, the property fails to meet any of the Criteria for historic designation.

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES: LOW POTENTIAL**

As documented on the 1949 Sanborn map, the current house is most likely the first that was constructed on the property.